

The Congress of the Beasts



The Congress of the Beasts



T H E
C O N G R E S S
O F T H E
B E A S T S,

Under the *Mediation* of the GOAT, for negotiating a Peace between the FOX, the Ass wearing a LION'S Skin, the HORSE, the TYGRESS, and other QUADRUPEDES at War. A FARCE of two ACTS, now in Rehearsal at a new grand Theatre in *Germany*.

To which is prefixt a curious PRINT of the last SCENE of the DRAMA, being the *general Conference*. Done by an eminent Hand:

Written originally in *High-Dutch* by the Baron HUFFUMBOURG-
HAUSEN; and translated by J. J. H—D—G—R, Esq;

N

Veluti in Speculo.



L O N D O N,

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THE
TRANSLATOR
TO THE
Candid READER.

HAVING spent a long and gay Life in the Service of the polite Part of this generous Nation, I am not a little vain that I am able to wind up the Bottom of it, by the Introduction among them of a more useful and moral Amusement than could be gleaned up in *Italy* or *France*.

There should be a certain Degree of Propriety observed in the Exhibition of publick Diversions: And I cannot help taking some Pride to myself, for having succeeded in my Attempts to adapting such Exhibitions, as I had any Hand in, to Times and Seasons. For Instance; the warlike Reigns of King *William* and Queen *Anne* had so enroughen'd this Nation, if a Foreigner may be pardon'd the Expression, that it was become necessary to introduce the *Italian* Opera, Ridotto, and Masquerade, in order to soften and humanize our *British* Heroes and Heroines. But seeing it is now become no less necessary to call them back to their native Roughness, it gives me infinite Pleasure that the ingenious Author of the following Drama has furnished me with a rational Amusement fitted to both my Purpose and the Necessity of the Times.

The Piece came too late to Hand to be exhibited this Season, But if Heaven is pleased to lengthen

lengthen out my Span 'till the next, I propose to graft the *German* on the Ruins of the *Italian* Opera, and for that Purpose shall spend the Summer in *Switzerland* and the *Empire*, where I doubt not of compleating a Company of Singers and Dancers that shall wake this Nation out of those soft, golden Slumbers created by *French* Heels and *Italian* Pipes. There is a certain Masculine Harmony in the *Teutonic* that invigorates the Body and Mind, which no other Language can vaunt of. And for this Reason, as I am a true Lover of *England*, I often lamented, since the breaking out of the present War on the Continent, that the *German* Opera had not been introduced here some Years before its Commencement. But we hope that *Fortune* will drop her Fillet the approaching Campaign, and smile on those brave *Britons* that are already broke to the Fatigues of War, and accustomed to the manly Roughness of *Germans*, which I propose introducing next Winter.

But how necessary soever I may think the Introduction of the *German* Drama on the *English* Stage to be towards eradicating the present Effeminacy, it would ill become me, that am but the Servant of the Publick, to attempt imposing an unknown Language upon them. For which Reason I judged it proper to present them with a correct Translation of the first Piece I intend to set out the next Season, that, in the mean While, there may be Leisure for acquiring some Knowledge of the Original.

There is a long Preface of the Author's, which I omit, not to hang too heavily on the Patience of the *English* Reader, explaining the Plan and Design of his Work, the Usefulness of *Moral* more
than

than *Plot* in dramattick Writings ; shewing the peculiar Qualities of the Beasts of his Drama, and proving that heretofore all the Brute Creation spoke as well as the Serpent ; with many other curious, and I suppose learned Observations on the *German* Drama, which he does not scruple preferring to the *French* and *Italian*, and equalling to the *Greek* and *Roman*. But as Criticism is as little my Talent as Politicks, the gentle Reader will, I hope, hold me excused if I follow not my Author in either.

As for that Part of the Work which falls to my Lot, all I can say, is, that the Translation is as perfect as I could make it, and as close as the two Languages would admit of. And as the Author makes no other Apology for introducing Quadrupedes in his Drama, and allowing them Speech and Rationality, but that *Æsop* and others had done as much before him, I beg Leave to content myself with the same Excuse for my Share in this Undertaking.

I cannot conclude, without intreating the candid Reader to be assured, that I had no View to the present Congress at *Aix-la-Chapelle*, when I undertook this Translation, my Mind being solely bent on the Introduction of Manliness and the Eradication of Effeminacy from among a Nation I am so signally obliged to. Nor shou'd I have thought there had been the least Allusion between this Peace and what may be acting abroad at present, unless my Bookseller, to whom I am obliged for my Title-Page, had inserted some few Words in it that may seem analogous.

Dramatis

Dramatis Bestiæ.

A Goat, a Mediator.

An Ass cover'd with a Lion's Skin.

A Horse.

A Tygres, with one Ear and Half a Tail.

A Wolf.

An Otter without Ears.

A Muzzled Bear.

A Buck-Hound.

Confederates.

A Fox.

A Leopard.

A Badger with one Ear.

A crippled Boar.

A Monkey.

Confederates.

Two Yahoos.

SCENE, a Forest in Germany.

THE

[1]

T H E

Congress of the Beasts.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

Scene, a Lawn on the Edge of a Forest.

Enter the Fox and Leopard.

Fox. **T**IS for our common Interest that you appear diffident of me, and sue to the *Afs* for a separate Peace.

Leop. The *Lion*, you mean?

Fox. I say the *Afs*, because such he has proved himself, by wasting his Strength for a Crew that did not care if he was hang'd.

Leop. Thanks to the *Steed*.——

Fox. Ay; without the w—— *Horse* we never had been able to take down that hereditary Enemy of our House.

Leop. You indeed, Cousin, have reduced the *Tygreſs* in this Part of the World, but have been quite passive in prosecuting the War against her where I was more immediately concern'd.

Fox. That War of yours has almost broke my Back. I wish it was ended any how.——

Leop. Any how, Cousin?

Fox. Lord! you are so testy and jealous.——
Yes, any how. Can't you see that it may be
A kindled

kindled at any Time, and with greater Prospect of Success.——

Leop. Why, I thought it had been settled between us to render this *Congress* fruitless; yet you talk of ending the War at any Rate.

Fox. Yes, your Share of it; but not by a general Peace. I had brought off the *Wolf*, which would have ended the War on that Side two Years ago, if my Purpose had not been crossed by your Jealousy and Ambition.

Leop. My Ambition, Mr. *Reynard*!——

Fox. Is this a Time for Altercation? Go to, Cousin, and learn to be wiser.——The *Wolf* shou'd have been detach'd from the Confederates at any Hazard or Expence. Take him aside, and practice upon him with Address. He has a craving Appetite, and be it your Care to satiate it. Give him all he asks; make him Presents besides. It will be in our Power to strip him when we please.—You won't find it so difficult as you may imagine to wean him from the *Tygress*, of whom he has Reason to be jealous, and she no less of him. In short, the *Tygress* thinks the *Wolf* already too great: But 'tis our Business to make him still greater, that we may make her less. As I said before, we can reduce him at Pleasure.—You know the two great Points in View with us, is the Reduction of the two only Powers that cou'd obstruct the Execution of our Plan of universal Influence.——

Leop. You mean the *Lion* and *Tygress*.

Fox. I do; and if I mistake not, we have pretty nigh accomplish'd our Design already.

Leop. The *Tygress*, indeed, has lost an *Ear* to the cunning *Monkey*, and you have shorten'd her
Tail

Tail for her; so that if we can save our Ally, the poor *Badger*, from her Grip, I think we may bid her Defiance for the future. But the Reduction of the *Lion* is like to be a Matter of greater Difficulty.

Fox. Not at all; the Thing is already almost done. The *Lion* is but the Shadow of what he was. He reckoned too much upon his own Strength, and, like an Oaf, has consumed it vainly, and without Thought or Reflexion. If our ill Luck had not thrown *Restoratives* in his Way, he had had, by this Time, a Foot in the Grave.——

Leop. Or cut his own Throat.——Ah, that Power, which our Supineness has given him o'er the *Rivers* and *Lakes*!

Fox. Let us ruin his Confederates by *Land*, and we shall have Leisure enough to outdo him afterwards on that *Element*, which is as unsteady as himself.——The *Tygres* and *Wolf* were no less impolitic in hugging the *Lion* too closely, than he was in doling away his Substance upon them. They should have husbanded his Strength, that another Time he might stand in the Gap to stay the Progress of an Invader. But they have given him such a Surfeit of War on dry Ground, and Subsidies, that they may both, hereafter, go to the D——l, before he will stir a Foot to save either.——Therefore, I say again, grant the *Wolf* more than he demands, provided he breaks with the *Tygres*, and our Work is done.——This is much about the Time that the *Horse* comes to this Lawn to take a cool Breakfast before the Dew is off the Trefoil. Leave me to mould him to our Designs, while you work upon the *Wolf*,
and

and raise the *Lion's* Hopes of his severing you from my Alliance.— Still do I call him out of of his Name, so prevalent is Custom ; but he retains the Skin only of what he was, and is now as very a *Brayer* as any in the Forest.— Fly ; the vain *Transformer* approaches. He must not observe that our Intimacy subsists.— Allay the Fears of our Friends. Assure the *Badger* of our Care and Protection ; and let the *Boar* be satisfied that he shall be restored to his Chestnuts. Reputation is of no less Necessity than Force, and the abandoning Allies is not the Way to maintain or acquire it.— Go to, Cousin ; be wise, and be not jealous and suspicious of your own Flesh and Blood.

Exit Leopard,

SCENE II.

There is no altering Nature. My Kinsman is honest, but his Jealousy is unsufferable. I put him in the Head of treating privately with the *Afs*, and he had like to have negotiated in good Earnest, tho' my Scheme went no farther than to lull the *Afs* into Supineness, and a Jealousy 'twixt him and his Confederates.— But see the *Transformer* appears.

SCENE III.

The Horse enters.

Good morrow, gentle *Steed*. Your Silver Hairs help no less to gild the Morning, and gladden the Eye, than those bright Coursers that drag the Chariot of the Sun.

Horse. Ah ! *Reynard*, that oily red Rag of thine has beguiled many an innocent Beast. But thy Glass is run, and thou can't deceive no more.

Thy

Thy Pranks are become so notorious, that you shall no longer be able to impose on the World.

Fox. The World! Alas, generous Steed! When did you know the World righteous in its Judgments? Is there an Inhabitant of the Forest that has not been censured? Who is there that has not suffered by evil Tongues? What Power, what Beauty or Virtue can fend against the Taint of of slanderous Envy? Even you yourself, that are the Boast and Pride of the Brute Creation, who worthily fill the *Lion's* Throne: You, who dispense your Benevolence so equally and abundantly: You, who are the very Essence of Politeness, and Pink of Courtesy: You, I say, whose Perfections I vainly attempt to pencil, have not been able to elude the poisonous Edge of Malice.

Horse. What could the vile Rabble say of me?

Fox. Rabble indeed they must be that could speak Evil of the Glory of the Plain. But such is the Malignancy of pale-faced Envy, that she points her Darts most at the most deserving.

Horse. That is true: Yet still, what could she urge against one, who, as you justly remark, has been as universally as eminently courteous and benevolent.

Fox. Already has the *Gudgeon* snapp'd at the Bait. (*aside.*) Falshood, you may believe; for Envy has no Acquaintance with Truth.

Horse. Truths or Falshoods, out with them. I would fain know what the Fiend could invent of me.

Fox. Pray excuse me.—'Tis not for me, who esteem and love you so passionately, to endanger your precious Life.

Horse. Endanger Life! How?

Fox.

Fox. Alas, Sir, you reflect not on the Consequence. As much a Philosopher as you are, you may not be able to stem the Torrent of your Passions: And do not all Calentures proceed from a Fermentation of the Fluids in the Body?

Horse. I thank you for your friendly Care of my Health; but on this Occasion it is needless.—I am compos'd, and shall remain so, tho' Malice speaks its worst.

Fox. I hope not. (*aside.*) Evil from an Enemy is expected, and may be born. But to be traduced by Friends; to be aspersed by such, at least, as ought to be Friends; to be vilified by those whom one held up against a Current of Power that wou'd otherways have shook them to Atoms.—

Horse. What Flesh could bear it?—'Sdeath! I burn till I know my secret Enemies.—Pray, my worthy Friend, inform me who?—

Fox. Those Snakes are whom you warm'd in your hospitable Bosom.—

Horse. Oh, Ingratitude!—My Mind misgives me—Pray, kind Cousin, speak and give Ease to my labouring Breast.

Fox. Cousin! I shall be brother'd if I hold out a little longer. (*aside*) Excuse me, Sir. To do an ill Office is against my Conscience; and Honour forbids the turning an Informer even against an Enemy.

Horse. Generous Soul? How tender his Conscience! (*aside*) My best and worthiest Friend, will you see me thus rack'd, and not assuage my Pain?

Fox. Time was you boasted of my Friendship; but I have been on the Wean, of late, in your good
Graces;

Graces ; and for that for which you should have erected me a Statue of Brass before the Gate of your Herring-Hovel.

Horse. I wish you had not named it : But the Insult was unbearable, of shutting me into my own Close, and tying up my Hands from fulfilling my Engagements.—

Fox. Has not that seeming Insult, which you know to have been originally of your own Projection, afforded you the fairer Pretext of luring the *Lion* into such consuming Schemes as must bring him in the End to couch, fawn and lick, as you shall be pleased to direct ? Already, you see, the Scheme has had its Effect.

Horse. I am not insensible of the Favour.— But what a Look had it, to see me yield to be chained so as not to be at Liberty to succour my best Friend in Distress ?

Fox. I say best Friend too, who, after your conferring infinite Obligations on her, can't afford you a good Word.—

Horse. Who, the *Tygress* not speak well of me ?

Fox. Did you ever know any of that haughty Brood act or speak generously or gratefully ? Profuse by Nature, and vainly indulgent to the voracious Cormorants about them, they are always needy, yet think all the World obliged to supply their Wants ; and, incroaching and overbearing, as well by Habit as Nature, they imagine all the World obliged to fight and support their Quàrrels.

Horse. You say true.—Ungrateful Baggage ! to traduce me that have almost beggar'd my *second-self* to keep her on her Legs.

Fox.

Fox. Nay, for the Matter of begging the *Lion*, as it was Part of your own Scheme *ab incipio*, it need not be imputed to her as Favour. For glad you might be of so specious an Opportunity of taming the fickle *Growler*, who, in Plight, is ever as haughty, restive and insulting, as he is abject and crouching when taken down and reduc'd.

Horse. I can perceive you are no Stranger to the Constitution of the *Lion*.—The greedy *Wolf* too, I suppose, and the covetous *Otter*, have made no less free with my Character than the ungrateful, squandering *Tygres*?

Fox. A grateful Return, truly, for so immense an Expence, and so imminent Risque, to say, *That you were an awkward, lubberly, ignorant, conceited, country Put, that assumed insufferable Airs ever since you held up the Whip over the generous Lion, whom you flea unmercifully yourself, but oblige him to be stingy to every Creature living.*

Horse. The poor *Lion* is flea'd indeed; but was it not to support those slandrous Wretches, that he is become the Shadow of what he was?

Fox. Were you but to see how they simper and loll out their Tongues at you as the *Lion* totters along the Glade.—But let me not wrong them of the Merit of a late Discovery, which they take special Care to make publick for your Credit.

Horse. What?

Fox. *That they plainly perceive the Lion to be metamorphos'd to an Als; that it must have been by your Sorcery; and that he now retains nothing of the noble Creature he was, but the Skin, which you cover him with for Decency's Sake.*

Horse.

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Horse. Insupportable! Shall I bear this from Creatures that breathe but by my Favours? What was the *Tygres* to the *Lion*, if I had not influenc'd him to rush to her Aid? If I had not persuaded him that the *Balance of Power* was wound up with her Safety, he had not stirr'd an Inch to save her.

Fox. That Bugbear.—What wou'd you have done without that Staff.

Horse. Oh! I have a Couple more to lean on occasionally, without recurring to *Religion*, which has been a Gin to catch Woodcocks with Time immemorial.

Fox. You mean the *Old Lion's Whelp*, and——

Horse. Yourself.—Name but the *Fox*, and immediately the Gall of all the *Lion's* Attendants flows up to their Eyes.—But to examine the black Ingratitude of those abandon'd Traducers, who defame me. If the *Tygres* have lost an *Ear* to that skipping crafty Creature, the *Monkey*, wou'd she have had a whole Piece of Skin on her Back, by this Time, if I had not prevailed on that cover'd *Ass* to support her even beyond his Strength? Wou'd the *Otter* have come off, the last Summer, with the Loss of a Tail only, if that *Ass*, who they say is in my Keeping, had not defended the Canal that leads to the Place of his Residence? You, Mr. *Reynard*, who was prepar'd to curry his Hide for him, best know if I exaggerate. And as for the *Wolf*, see how plump and sleek he looks ever since my interesting the *Lion* in his Cause? Yet these are they that ring my Dispraise throughout the Forest——Oh; Revenge! Sweet Revenge! I will retire a While to meditate. (*going*)

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Fox. We shall have your Company anon at the general Conference?

Horse. 'Twill come to nothing.——

Fox. Forbid it Heav'n!——I am sick of the War.

Horse. A Copy of your Countenance.

Fox. Sincere, 'pon Honour! Therefore shall be obliged to you, if you promote the Work of Peace.

Horse. If I thought you in earnest.

Fox. As much so as the *Tygres* and the *Wolf* are for continuing the War, in Hopes of Acquisitions, while your generous *Ward* saddles himself with the whole Expence.

Horse. Rather call him plain *Afs*, than a *Ward* of mine; for, Mr. *Reynard*, tho' he be so, you know one wou'd not have such a Word blab'd abroad.

Fox. Ay, that's true: Besides, who knows what Figary might take the Animal in his wise Noddle, shou'd he hear it reported that he wore Leading-Strings.

Horse. 'Pshaw! what Matter how he thinks? He may swagger and rant, according to Custom, and bounce of Liberty and Free-will, but all he has of either, since I first had taken the Length of his Paw, he may put into his hollow Tooth.

Fox. You found him somewhat stubborn at first.

Horse. But I soon found the Secret of breaking that untractable Spirit.——

Fox. As how?

Horse. By applying properly to the Passions of those in his Retinue.

Fox.

Fox. I understand you. How green were the Politicians of the last Age?

Horse. Mere Babies! well may Folks be driven to beg from home that know not how to work on the Passions. But there is my Excellency, Mr. Reynard. I study the Creatures I am to practise upon, and know them so perfectly, that I can even lure them to be their own Corruptors.

Fox. *Self-Execution* I know to be common among them; but *Self-Corruption* is to me quite a Novelty.

Horse. Lud! Mr. Reynard, who wou'd have thought you so dull of Apprehension? Is it not easily conceivable, that a *few*, intrusted by the *whole*, may be persuaded to give a great deal that they themselves may share in the Spoil.

Fox. You reckon it Self-Corruption where the Bribe is of native Growth.

Horse. Assuredly. What is it but giving with one Paw, and receiving with another?

Fox. Did none fall between? Ah, subtle *Pal-fry*!

Horse. Where so much Muck is shovell'd about, you may believe I take Care to shuffle some to manure my native Paddock.—Thus, my Friend, have you the whole Secret of that Sorcery imputed to me by that ungrateful Crew, whom I had so essentially served.—But I will be reveng'd.—And, Mr. Reynard, if, in the Promotion of a Peace, I can be useful, you may reckon on my Impartiality.

Fox. I desire little for myself, so Justice be done, and my Friends are contented, I shall be pleas'd.—For Instance; as you are straitned
for

for Room at home, why might not I be permitted to insist that your Paddock be enlarg'd at the Expence of two or three of your neighbouring, dronish, praying *Baboons*?

Horse. Ah, Mr. *Reynard*, wou'd you stand my Friend so far.—

Fox. My Word is my Bond.—There shall be no Peace unless your Possessions are enlarged.—Here is my Paw upon't.

Horse. My best Friend! I'll go seek my Allies, and dispose them to your Purpose. [Exit.

S C E N E IV.

Fox. Who would have thought that clod-pated Animal capable of moulding the once bold Ruler of the Forest into an *Ass*? He discovers the Magick by which he wrought the Change.—Ay; all-ruling *Corruption*; that double-edg'd Sword which hews all before it, as I myself have often experienced.—But see, the *Otter* bends this Way, I'll avoid him till I have wherewith to practise on his predominant Passion. [Retires.

S C E N E V.

Enter the Otter.

Otter. This Congress can come to nothing, tho' the *Fox* shou'd be more sincerely bent on Peace than I think he is.—How shou'd it, while most of the Parties at War find their Accounts in the Continuance of it: The *Tygress* hopes to recover all she has lost to the *Monkey* and *Fox*, and wreak her Resentment on the unhappy *Badger*, fallen under her Displeasure. While she and the greedy *Wolf* are supported at the Expence of the *Ass*, so long will they be Enemies to Peace.
And

And tho' enfeebled the *Ass* himself be, I fear he is to not hearty in his Progress to Peace, But can it be otherways, while he is in Ward to the *Horse*, who so largely benefits by the expensive Butties of his Pupil; and who besides may have an Eye to *Acquisitions* by protracting the Peace.—But, alas! why shou'd I wonder at others being indifferent to Peace, since I myself am unresolv'd. The War forced a domestick *Master* on me, and I know not whether War or Peace will soonest rid me of him.—Hy, ho!—Lord *Reynard*, you are the Author of my present Woes.

[*The Fox comes forward.*]

S C E N E VI.

Fox. My old and worthiest Friend, I partipate of all thy Cares, which I will alleviate at the Hazard of my Life, if you trust to my Conduct.

Otter. Can I rely on one that has already wrung my Tail off; and by so doing, against the Laws of all good Neighbourhood, forced me to own the Power of a Family I had abjured not Half a Century ago?

Fox. Therein behold the Judgment of the All-righteous. You don't forget how you had disposed of your late *Master* to a *Neighbour*.

Otter. Was it not lawful to pull a Thorn out of one's Foot?—

Fox. But not in order to put it in that of another.

Otter. I see you are a Casuist. I wish you may prove as good a Physician, to cure me of this new *Taskmaster*, whom your Incroachments had brought upon me.

Fox.

Fox. You wou'd have had none, if you had withdrawn from the War, as I often advised you. But by your blowing neither hot nor cold, you oblig'd me to make that late Push on your advanc'd Possessions, which rouz'd your muddy Domesticks to saddle you with the Load you complain of.—'Tis only a fresh Salmon and a Cream Cheese. (*Enter a Yahoo with a Basket*) I wish, my dear Friend, it had been more, and better for your Sake.—But to the Purpose of getting rid of your new Master.

Otter. Ah, my noble Friend! help me to draw that Thorn, and command me for ever. It shall be Peace or War as you please. If you incline to continue the War, I will so embarrass Things at home, that you shall succeed where you will. And if you be bent on Peace, I will so dispose my Auxiliaries that you may command it.

Fox. As my Conquest must lessen the Influence of your new *Master*, with those who contributed most to his Elevation, you must not take the Alarm if I push the War home to the very Centre of your Possessions.—Cou'd I take to the last Dyke of your Country, you know all wou'd be as safe in my Possession, as in your own.

Otter. Ay, ay; on a Peace you wou'd restore all.—

Fox. That belong'd to you; ay, to a single Fish Pond. But as for what I conquer'd from the *Tygres*.—

Otter. You and she may settle that Point as you please. I am not much oblig'd to her Ladyship. Had she withstood the Temptations of the *Lion*, the War had never come Home to me.

Fox. You mean the *Ass*.—

Otter.

Otter. I do so. Yet I remember him a *Lion*, and a sturdy one.

Fox. About a Century ago, when he gave your Jacket a handsom Drubbing. Eh, eh!

Otter. And of a later Date, when he curried your Hide for you, and was well nigh unkennelling your Honour. Eh, eh!

Fox. When my great Grandfire was grown old, and in the Tutelage of an old Sorceress.

Otter. Marry, I think the poor *Lion* has been in as bad Tutelage of late.——That d——d *Horse*, that has transform'd him to an *Ass*! From a little, lousy *Hobby*, whom no Body car'd a Rush for, he would be a Beast of Consequence forsooth, and egg'd on the War that he might find an Opportunity of enlarging his Pasture. He pretended an Esteem for the Lady *Tygress*, tho' he panted in Secret, no less than his Neighbours, that her Nails might be close par'd. And so far he has succeeded; for her right and fairest *Ear* is in the Possession of the *Monkey*, a Creature no less jealous and watchful of the *Horse's* Motions than of the *Tygress*.——Ah, Mr. *Reynard*! 'tis well for you that he has had the Management of the *Lion*.

Fox. Still you forget that he is no longer the Terror of the Plain.

Otter. Thanks to that vain, swollen Animal, the *Horse*.——

Fox. Whom I wou'd not wish separated from the *Ass* for ever so much.

Otter. One easily saw your *Tendre* for the *Horse* in your late Slackness to support the bold *Whelp* that had push'd almost to the *Ass's* Hovel.—Faith, old Acquaintance, 'twas no Indication of an o'erflowing Generosity, not to have seiz'd so favourable

an Opportunity of aiding a Family you had a thousand Times sworn to serve. You saw how I behaved on that Occasion.

Fox. Yes; you sent Beasts without Teeth to succour the *Ass*.—But as for your Sarcastism concerning my Generosity, on that Occasion, you are to know, that, as a private Person, I heartily love that hapless Race; but as the political Parent of a large Family of my own, I am not at Liberty to indulge my Inclination. Those elevated to high Dignities are said to have two Consciences; and it may, with equal Truth, be said that they have, or ought to have two distinct Affections; one private, the other publick; my Heart bends to the exiled Race, but my Reason warps me from them; I may play them on the *Ass* occasionally, affecting to serve them; but in the Main I cannot with the *Ass* to be from under the Tuition of the *Horse*. While he is there, I am sure he will remain an *Ass*. But I don't so much like that pushing *Whelp*; shou'd he once nestle in the *Hovel*, I doubt he would roar so as to wake and unite all the Beasts of the Forest against me, as a Female of his Race did not quite Half an Age ago.—I have examined that *Whelp* narrowly, and I like him not. He is too thoughtful and prying for me to wish him in my Neighbourhood. He might remember old Slightsto my Cost.—No, no; give me the friendly *Nag* in the Direction of the *Ass* for me Money.

Otter. For what Purpose then do you harbour that young *Whelp*, since you never design to support his Interest.

Fox. For what Purpose have you and the *Ass* put yourselves to an immense Expence to persuade the *Bear* to travel in the Depth of Winter?

Otter.

Otter. To be at Hand in the Summer to aid us against you.

Fox. An Imposition.—You knew the *Bear* would be of little Use to you after so fatiguing a Journey, even should the *Monkey* and others permit him to proceed. But you imagined he might help to frighten me into some Concessions.—You now have my Answer about harbouring the *Whelp*.—Zooks! See where your Allies steer.

Otter. They may not see you and I together. Shou'd they think we are on good Terms, they would be as shy of me as a cackling Poulet wou'd be of thee.—Farewel. Help me to fling the new Rider that bestrides me, and I am yours to the Stumps. [Exit.

Fox. Eh, eh! He wishes me to help him off with his Rider; I may, but 'tis that I may sit in the Saddle myself. Nor can I fail, unless that cunning Elf, the *Monkey*, stand in my Way. That Urchin puzzles me, and is the first that I cou'd neither bully nor cozen. Perhaps the waking his Jealousy may throw him more implicitly into my Power. As he watches all my Steps, he must have observed the Intimacy 'twixt me and the *Horse* and *Otter*. I wish the *Tygres* wou'd move this Way to finish the Scene.—And behold, to my Wish she comes.—Madam, propitious Heav'n has at length flung me the bless'd Opportunity I long have yearn'd for. (*The Tygres comes forward*) Ah, Madam! was there a Casement to my Heart, you might behold your fair Self seated there high above all other Considerations. My Dame is in Years, and ailing; and your Mate a Log, that is no Match for one
C of

of your high Mettle and Birth. Deign but to smile on me, and we shall give the Law to the whole Brute Creation.

S C E N E VII.

Tyg. To put away my Husband! Heav'n's! What an impious Proposal was that? But the crafty Wretch must ever deal in superlative Wickedness.—Yet will I stifle my Resentment, to see if I can win him to my Design on the perfidious *Monkey*. (*aside.*) Alas, Sir! What Charms can you see in me that am but the Shadow of what I was, and have lost an Ear and almost all the Tail?

Fox. The latter is with me, and you may command it at Will. I'll sow it on so as it can't be seen that it had ever been stitch'd.

Tyg. But my Ear, which I can less spare than my Tail.

Fox. That I shall procure you too, if you implicitly throw yourself into my longing Arms. Ah, lovely Matron! how joyously should we forget old Father Time together—(*offers to embrace.*) I see the *Monkey* peeping from yon Bow'r. (*aside.*) Ah, Madam! pity him that breathes but for thee. [*Kneels to her.*]

Tyg. Rise, Sir, is that a Posture for a Conqueror?

Fox. Rather the Victim of your all-conquering Eyes. [*Still kneels.*]

Tyg. You are so prevailing.—Here, Sir, take that as an Earnest of my farther Smiles. (*gives her Paw to kiss.*) My Allie's look this Way; this Conduct may rouse them to act more vigorously in my Cause. The *Lion* is become a mere *Ass*,
and

and, besides, is worn down to a Skeleton ; and the *Horse*, who leads the Dolt, secretly wishes no Increase of my Power, tho' he pretends other-ways. The *Wolf* is ever craving, and basks and fattens at my Expence ; and the *Otter* is more intent to get rid of the Bit in his Jaws, than the making me whole. Cou'd I count on the Sincerity of this crafty Suitor, or mould him to a Breach with the *Monkey*, I might be reveng'd of that ungenerous Neighbour.—Ah ! what would I give to be at Liberty to return the Urchin's Favours.

[*Aside.*

Fox. Madam, you are thoughtful.

Tyg. Thinking how you and I shall drive the World before us.

Fox. But the *Bear*, that unlick'd Clod ! I am sorry you would encourage him to quit his native Woods. He may chance to take a Liking to your fairer Forests, and hereafter cross your best Purposes.

Tyg. He comes not at my Expence ; yet, to oblige you, I'll contrive to delay his Journey ; or, shou'd I fail of that, I will help to muzzle him—See, Mr. *Reynard*, your Power with me already.

Fox. Infinitely obliging.—Yet let me rather trust to the *Monkey*, whose pinking Eyes I see kindling with Jealousy.

(*Aside.*

Tyg. Ah, Mr. *Reynard* ! lead me from that hateful Creature. See how sleek and shining his Coat since he has feasted on my poor Ear.—Covetous Varlet ! who knows nor keeps Faith but as it tends to his Interest.—I can't bear the Sight of the odious Wretch.—Adieu, Sir ; I shall see you again before the general Conference.

[*Exit.*

S C E N E

S C E N E VIII.

Enter the Monkey grinning and skipping.

Fox. I am pleas'd to see you in so high Glee ;
and yet this approaching *Bear* might have stuck
in your Stomach as well as mine.

Monk. Who can help cracking his Guts to
Fiddle-Strings to see you adoring an earless, tail-
less Termagant, that would tear out your Liver
and mine if she could.

Fox. She is not in half so great Pain for her *Tail*
as for her *Ear*.

Monk. And she shall have both mine before I
part from it.

Fox. You would find it difficult to keep either,
should she and her Allies, aided by the *Bear*,
fling me on my Back, or e'en force me to spew
up what I had swallow'd since the War.

Monk. I thought you more determined than to
fear without Cause. Examine your Enemies,
and you will soon discover their Weakness. The
Lion, who sets the whole hostile Machine in Mo-
tion, is no more that powerful Beast he was, tho'
he struts as much as ever. He still affects wearing
the *Lion's* Skin, but all else about him denotes the
Afs, the Dupe he has been to all the World, but
more especially to my Neighbour the *Horse*.
The *Tygres* has little else than her native Fierce-
ness to trust to, now that the *Afs* is but the Sha-
dow of what the *Lion* was : And the *Wolf*, unaid-
ed by both, must soon truckle to you and your
Ally the *Leopard*. Then as for the *Otter*, he is
less anxious about your Conquests, than of getting
rid of his *new Master*, and of my Demands upon
him, and my Vicinity.——Against such Con-
federates

federates what have you to fear? Let the *Bear* come on. I engage to muzzle him by the Way, or cut out such Work for your Enemies, as will oblige them to curse the Day they bargained with that savage Lump of Clay to dance to their Fiddle so far from home.

Fox. 'Tis not far to the cherish'd Pasture of the beloved *Palfry*. Eh, eh!

Monk. Nor to the Vitals of the *Otter*; or even to her Ladyship's fairest remaining Glades.——

Mr. Reynard, you are by Nature wary, I am so by Reason. In vain should I go about denying that I am diffident of you; in vain likewise should you attempt persuading me that you are not equally diffident of me. But one Thing we may both be sure of, which is, that we shall be true to one another as long as it shall be our reciprocal Interests. The lower you take the *Tygress*, the safer shall I be. The lower you reduce the *Otter*, the less shall I have to apprehend from the Haughtiness and Vanity of the *Horse*, who has assumed great Airs of late, and might pretend, by the Help of the *Ass* and the *Otter's* new *Master*, to dictate and lord it in my Neighbourhood.——You can't think how that thick-skull'd Animal swagger'd among us ever since he has practis'd his Arts on the credulous *Ass*. But I'll take him a Peg lower, or it will cost me a Fall.——I could see you paying Court to the *Tygress*.——You may gain her, but it must be at my Cost, on whose Friendship you may ever reckon, because it will be my Interest to cultivate yours. But can you say as much of her you woo'd in my Presence? Raise her, and she will surely attempt pulling you down. Need I put you in Mind of the Enmity
of

of her Ancestors? Need I call to your Remembrance the Haughtiness and Fierceness of her own Nature, the Injuries she reckons you did her, and her unrelenting Temper. Revolve these Matters in your Mind; weigh them in the Scale of your Prudence, and determine which Party you'll take, which Course you'll steer.——Methinks I can see the Meaning of your seeming Earnestness to press forward this Business of a Congress. I can see likeways that you probably will succeed in slack'ning the Bands which bind your Enemies together.——Go on and prosper; my Wishes go with you, and you may count on my Power as Occasions offer.——You stand not in need of Advice, or I might point out the Method of dissolving the Congress, and casting the Odium of the Dissolution on your Enemies, as you did almost half a Century ago.——But I have done——It may be notic'd that we are caballing together, which might breed a Suspicion that may impede the Execution of our Schemes.——Farewel! I'll meet you at the Cave as soon as the Sun withdraws to take a Nap.

[*Exit,*

S C E N E IX.

Fox. He is right. Interest is the only Link that binds; and all Professions are vague that are not founded on that first Principle. The *Otter* could upbraid me for not supporting the late vigorous Attempt of the *Lion's* Whelp to dispossess the *Horse*. But was it my Interest that the *Ass* shou'd resume his pristine Shape and Vigour? While I benefit by the *Nag's* Influence in the *Ass's* Family, I can never think it eligible to abet an Invasion of his Property. But it may be urg'd, that the *Whelp*

is my Relation; so is the young *Leopard*, and nearer of Kin, besides being wedded to my Daughter; yet how passively have I supported him in his late Attacks upon the *Tygress* and *Wolf*? And why was I not warmer in his Cause, but because it was my Interest to push my Conquests nearer home. But, again, it will be said, that I had engag'd my Honour to the *Whelp*. In answer, I say, that *Honour*, separated from *Self-Interest*, is a Phantom, a Chimera, a Cloud, which Fools embrace.

*A specious Theme, untaught in Wisdom's School;
A stensy Web to catch the vulgar Fool.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Scene, a Cave at the Foot of a Rock in a Forest.

A cropt Badger advances from the Cave.

Badg. **T**O what End was my Journey to this Congress? If it please not the *Fox*, there can be no Peace; and if sincerely bent upon it, neither he nor the *Leopard* will postpone it for my Sake. So Provision be obtain'd for the young *Leopard*, in my Neighbourhood, I shall be left a Prey to the ravenous *Wolf*. Already has he, and the inexorable *Tygress*, wrung off my Ears, and gutted my Habitation of most of all that was valuable there; yet are they not satiated, but will oblige me to sign a general Release at this Congress.—Oh! Conscience, Justice, Generosity! whether are ye flown? Not to the *Lion*, once fam'd for harbouring all three; for he open'd the Sluice whence issues all the Evils that are come upon me of late.----Ah! that sleeveless,

less, flagitious *Treaty*, which forced me to an Alliance with the *Fox* and *Leopard*!—I am told the *Lion* is no longer the Noble, Powerful, Generous Beast he was; but is become an *Ass*, still affecting the Garb and Mien of what he had been. Though this Intelligence come from the *Fox*, a suspected Person, yet am I warranted, from my own Experience of his Conduct, to believe the *Transformation* real and effective. Who but an *Ass* wou'd waste his own Strength to increase that of the *Wolf*, who has no very distant Claim to the *Lion's Skin* he wears, and who, shou'd the generous *Whelp* be out of his Way, wou'd push home that Claim, and might much sooner find Abettors than the hapless *Whelp*? Again; What Connexion is there between the *Ass* and *Tygress*, that he shou'd spin himself like a Spider, to weave a Web for her, who, if she cou'd win the *Fox* to her Interest, wou'd drop her present Supporter? But what greater Indication can there be of the *Transformation*, than the Injustice of first forcing me on the Measure they blame me for, and then moving Heaven and Earth to punish me for that very Measure? The poor *Boar* suffers in common with me; but his Crime, if he committed any, was spontaneous. A wide Difference there is then between us. Yet is he like to fadge better than I, because, luckily for him, he happens to have a *Family Interest* in the *Horse*, who, as Fame tattles abroad, forces the blinded *Ass* to play at Leap-Frog.—But behold the *Boar*.—Welcome, my Brother in Distress; I was afraid your feeble Limbs wou'd not have born you hither.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter a crippled Boar.

Boar. Neighbour *Badger*, I crept hither that you and I might consult how to behave to-morrow at the general Conference. I gave myself up implicitly to the *Fox* and *Leopard*, not that I had a good Opinion of them, but because I harbour'd a worse of the *Tygres* and *Wolf*, who are superlatively ravenous and savage.

Badg. See you here the sad Proof of their Ferocity and Voracity? But you, tho' they enjoy your Possessions at present, are sure to bend them to Humanity by your Power with your Kinsman the *Horse*.

Boar. I hope so; and have lately dispatched a Minister to the *Lion's* Court for the Purpose.—

Badg. Had you call'd it the Court of the *Ass*, you wou'd not be mistaken, if there be any Truth in Report.

Boar. They do talk abroad of a *Transformation* there, which does less Honour to the *Lion* than *Horse*.

Badg. Marry! I know not where most Honour is due, whether to the *Guardian* or *Pupil*. The latter weakly gives up his Understanding, and resigns his Power. But does not the other too proclaim his Folly in exercising his Power in such a Manner as to endanger his own immediate Interest and Safety? For, shou'd the *Lion*, or let us call him *Ass*, fall under his Load, by over-driving, how long after shall the *Driver* himself be able to keep upon his Legs?—But 'tis no Business of ours; at present we must wish well to our Allies only.—How do you find them disposed.

D

Boar.

The Congress of the Beasts.

Boar. Fair Words cost little? And you know the *Fox* is no Niggard of those. The *Leopard*, tho' naturally more reserved, is not less flattering: And yet I am told no Mention has been made of either you or I in his late Proposals to the *Lion*.

Badg. Ah Neighbour! When shall we weaker Beasts grow wiser, and pay Attention to our own immediate Interest only? In allying with the more Powerful, what Chance have we of bettering our Situation? If they succeed they may chuse whether they keep their Word with us; and if they don't, we are sure to be sacrific'd to the obtaining any tolerable Conditions of Peace for them. I have so mean an Opinion of the Honour and Friendship of our present Allies, that I would throw myself at the *Lion's* Feet for Protection, had he not been transformed to that waver-ing, cringing, silly Animal an *Ass*.——Bless us! what a Conjunction is there, the *Leopard* and *Wolf*! I wish it does not portend the Detension of my *Ears*, which the latter holds and sets his Heart on.

Boar. Or of my Acorns and Chesnuts. Ah, my afflicted Friend! If, after all our Sufferings and Merit, these great Powers should be lukewarm in our Cause.——

Badg. Let us retire and listen, perhaps we may learn our Fate from their Converse. [*They retire.*]

S C E N E III.

Enter the Leopard and the Wolf.

Leop. I agree that it becomes the Great and Eminent to entertain Notions of Honour; but they should be careful not to spin the Thread too fine. And, if I mistake not, those Notions you
advance

advance are of too delicate a Texture for one in your Circumstances. Should the Fortune of the War turn the Tables upon you, wou'd not your Family have Cause to upbraid you for not closing with my friendly Proposal?—Reflect on the Impotence of your Allies. The *Tygres* is on her last Legs, and the *Lion* in a galloping Consumption. See how the puny *Badger* has baffled the joint Efforts of your Alliance.

Wolf. But we are returning again to the Charge.

Leop. To your own Undoing if you proceed. The *Badger* is now in a Condition to smile at your Efforts, and wishes you wou'd work your own Ruin in attempting the second Siege of his Rock. —But why don't you proceed?

Wolf. Waiting for the Approbation of our Ally the *Lion*.

Leop. For his Aid you might better say, to set your Arms in Motion. Does not this Delay, and your late Supplication to the *Lion*, manifestly shew your Impotency? Yet do you hesitate to fall into our Measures that are your Nephews.

Wolf. To wave the Consideration of former Sights and Affronts, both by yourself and Cousin *Reynard*, I am willing to own that you have a natural Claim to my Affection. But you'll admit that my own Whelps have still a stronger. If I quit my present Alliance, I resign my Family to your good Liking; and, when surrounded by *Cubs* of the Blood of the *Reynards*, may be free or in Chains as they shall please.

Leop. Fie, Uncle! To talk of Chains to be imposed on your Family by any of our Blood!

Wolf. Ambition, Cousin, is blended with our Nature, and where it is the predominant Passion,

as with the *Reynards*, 'tis not easily kept within proper Bounds. You know that my Veins flow with the Blood of the *Reynards*.——

Leop. And of the *Lion's* too. What is become of that young intrepid *Whelp* your Relation?

Wolf. He is, where it will be attempted to lure me if I shou'd out-live the elder Branch of my *Dam's* House, under the Eye of the *Fox*, who keeps him to frighten the *Lion*.——

Leop. The *Afs* more properly.——Surely, Uncle, you can't be a Stranger to a *Transformation* on the Forest rings of.

Wolf. The *Lion* indeed is grown of late slower in his Motions, and more an Oeconomist.

Leop. Well he may, when worn down to the Stumps by blustering and wrangling, and meddling in all the Quarrels of the Forest. What was the *Tygres* to him? Or what could he have gained or lost if the Forests near you had been otherways divided than they are? But that *Horse*, who leads him of late, had his Views in putting the weak *Dolt* upon Projects foreign to his natural Interest.——See where he comes tottering to both Edges of the Path, as if intoxicated with Liquor. Perhaps you wou'd not care he should see us together,

Wolf. He is grown unsufferably jealous of late.

Leop. A certain Indication of his Impotency.——Hang no longer on him, but recline on us your own Flesh and Blood. You shall chalk out your own Terms. —Adso! He is just upon us—this Way.

[*They retire.*]

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

Enter the As, covered with a Lion's Skin.

As. What can cause the late Shyness of my Allies? They seem to avoid me; and, far from dwelling on the Musick of my Roar as formerly, if I open my Mouth they fall a-yawning, as if some Driveller had been braying.—One meets me of a Morning, and asks, with a Simper, Lord, Sir, have you had a good Night's Rest? I fear you sat up late, or drank more freely than usual. Another smiles in my Face, asking if the Course of Physick I am in was for the Gout, the Gravel, or——And a third tells me, as if I had shook like an Aspin Leaf, that an Ague in the Spring was Physick for a King.—What can this mean?——Is such the Politeness of Courtiers? Is such the Gratitude of Allies I had succoured beyond my Strength?——Allies do I call Beasts that keep the Field at my Expence, and who would scarce be known in the War without me? Yet for all their Impotency, they take Airs upon themselves as much as if the War had been all mine, and they maintained it for me. The *Wolf*, with the Digestion of the *Ostrich*, is constantly craving, and lowers most frightfully if not quickly supply'd. But of late he is grown unusually fullen and reserved. The *Otter*, far from thanking me for stopping the Carreer of the *Fox* last Campaign, murmurs hideously, that I had purposely brought all his Misfortunes upon him, to pave the Way for his new *Master*. Neither is the *Tygress* less sparing of her Reflexions, occasionally. The other Day I would have snatch'd a Kiss from her, and

and unhappily hurt her wounded Ear in the Scuffle, she angrily said, *This, and all my other Woes, I owe to your braying Majesty*; and so flirtd away from me.—Pray Heaven that Sorcerer, the *Fox*, has not bewitch'd my Confederates since these Conferences begun—I never lik'd this Congress, knowing what Tricks that arch Villain was capable of if he had an Opportunity. But I must yield to the Intreaties of my Allies, who otherways might arraign me of Wilfulness and Ambition. They forced me likeways into that other Snare, laid for us by that crafty Juggler, the Mediation of the *Goat*. A decrepit Animal, worn out with Lechery and Age! What Hopes can we entertain that he shall be able to conciliate Minds so inflamed, and so many jarring Interests? But such are the Shifts and Wiles of *Reynard*, who is no otherways to be made honest than by being soundly bang'd into fair Dealing.—Oh! that I had been permitted to hunt him down by the *Water* only, as I was inclined! But there is no having one's own Will among so many that pretend to direct. Besides my cherish'd *Steed* was not inclin'd to, nor cou'd have had any Share in the Chace, if it had been *aquatile* only. I wou'd not for the World but my dear *Horse* should share in the Glory and *Emoluments* of a Land-War. In this he makes some Figure, in that he would not be so much as known. See how sleek and wanton he's grown since the War, and what Court is paid him, more than even to me that am the Support of it.—Methinks I hear the Chattering of the *Monkey*; I wish I could have him a Moment to myself, without the *Horse*, whom he
can't

can't abide, tho' his near Relation, to see if I cou'd wean him from the Fox.

S C E N E V.

Enter Monkey.

Monk. Ha! is your Worship meditating on Religion or Fashions? On the latter, I judge, by the Cut of your Skirts. Eh! eh!—Pray Sir, which was your Taylor, *French* or *German*? Both, or I am mistaken. One took Measure of you, and the other cut the Hide. Let me see, as I live you are well fitted. (*He skips round him.*) One wou'd swear it grew to your Back, if it was not for those lovely *Ears* that are just above your wise Forehead. Eh, eh!

Afs. You are ever arch and jocosé; but at present Seriousness would better become the Situation of our Affairs.

Monk. What would the Wiseacre be at?

[*Aside.*

Afs. Mr. Monkey, there has been a Coolness 'twixt you and I of late, which you are sensible I gave no Cause for.

Monk. No, Sir; great Wits, they say, have short Memories.—If I mistake not, you have a pretty Nack at *partitioning*. Don't you understand dividing the *Bear's* Skin before he is dead? Eh, eh!

Afs. You are pleas'd to be Laconick.—But the present State of Affairs, and particularly of Religion, calls upon you to turn along with us, your natural Friends, on the common Enemy.

Monk. Religion, Sir!—Pray what Religion do you think I am of?

Afs. Of the pure.—

Monk.

Monk. Religion of *Rulers*, that have none of their own, like Princesses 'till married, but are ready to embrace any dictated to them by Self-Interest. Have you not heard that I am building a Temple for *Baboons* in my Capital?

Afs. Yes; and was sorry.—

Monk. I was so wise as to tolerate all Religions for the Happiness of Society and Improvement of my Country. Look you, Sir, you have given me a Surfeit of *Religion* and *Balancing*, two Objects that have employed your Attention for many Years. And pray examine what you have got by the vain Pursuit.

Afs. I'll never permit Errors in Religion, nor Incroachments on publick Liberty.

Monk. Oh! the *Balance of Power* is a sweet Toy for one to waste his whole Strength after. Pray, you mighty Hower of Windmills, and Embracer of Clouds, do you ever view your own sweet Phiz in the Silver Stream?

Afs. Not since the War. I leave the Care of my Dress to my beloved *Horse*.—

Monk. Whose Business it is to keep you in Ignorance, and not let you see the Aukwardness of your Figure.

Afs. Aukwardness of my Figure, Sir! What do you mean by it?

Monk. That you will be anon the best dress'd Beast in the Forest.—But methinks your *Russian* Taylor is somewhat flower of Motion than your present Wants seem to require. Eh, eh!

Afs. Sir, my *Russian* Taylor, as you call him, may chance to take Measure of some Folks Backs that cock the Tail very high at present.

Monk.

Monk. O la! now you talk of Tails, I see you have a Couple. Spare one to your beloved *Ty-gress*, who has lost her own. Eh, eh!

Afs. I thought you One of Business, but find you a Trifler.

Monk. Because I don't listen to your vain Proposals, that are but the Shadow of what you were in Strength of Body or Mind. You see not the Change in your Person, you perceive not the Decay of your Flesh, tho' visible to all that look at you; nor the Decay of the Faculties of your Mind, tho' obvious to all that converse with you. But such are the Effects of *Balance-hunting*, and being in *Ward* to my Neighbour the *Horse*.

Afs. Sir, as I take it, this Impertinence does not become you, nor shall I bear it.—

Monk. O, pray take Care that you don't fall, should you lift up the fourth Leg to correct my Insolence.—Eh, eh!

Afs. This is past bearing.—To be treated thus by so contemptible a Creature.—

Monk. That dares tell you Truth, which is more than your favourite *Horse* ever did or will.—

Afs. I'll hear nothing to the Disadvantage of my Friends.

Monk. I know none you have to your Back, but such as affect Friendship for what they can flatter you out of. Of these is your Friend the *Bear*, who melts down his Greese in hurrying to your Relief. Eh; eh!

Afs. No more; or——

Monk. Nay; if you won't take Advice, and will be in a Passion, 'tis Time to leave you.—
Your Servant.

[Exit. grinning.]

E

SCENE

S C E N E VI.

Afs. I am sorry I was not able to keep my Temper. His Friendship wou'd add such Strength, and give such Weight to our Confederacy, that we shou'd presently bear down the Enemy. But he is gone.—I'll try what the *Horse* can do with him.—But now I think on't, all his Coolness to me is out of Enmity to that generous Creature.—Ay, ay; Neighbours and Relations seldom agree well together.—Who have we here? The *Fox*! I hope he has not over-heard the Impertinence of that Urchin.

S C E N E VII.

Enter the Fox bowing and cringing.

Fox. I am overjoyed at an Opportunity of paying you my Compliments on so auspicious a Day as that which gave Birth to the Lord of the Forest.

Afs. What do you mean, Mr. *Reynard*; what Day?

Fox. That of your Birth.

Afs. A Mistake.—

Fox. Why, Sir, the Gaiety and Richness of your Dress would speak the joyous Day, if you had not receiv'd upon it the Compliments of the *Monkey*, whom I just met coming from your *Le-vée*.

Afs. These Rascals come purposely to affront me, because they know I am ty'd up by the Privilege and Neutrality of the Place, assented to by all Parties. But if I can catch the Varlet within my Reach, I'll forget where I am for a Moment. (*aside.*) I thought indeed to keep the Secret, as I have

have not the necessary Equipage here to entertain as became my Dignity. Otherways, Mr. Reynard, you wou'd have had a Card; for on these Occasions I forget that I have Foes.—You seem to admire my Dress. I shall be vain of its Elegance, if you approve of my Taste.

Fox. I never saw any Thing so elegant and becoming.

Ass. If it lay a little closer behind. Don't you think, Mr. Reynard, it wou'd bear to be taken in on the Crupper? I know you are a Judge. Pray lay your Paw upon't, and feel how loose it sits. [*As the Fox feels, the Ass kicks him down with his hind Foot, and goes off braying and exulting.*]

S C E N E VIII.

Fox. Thus are the best Fencers oft put out of their Play by rough Bunglers. Who cou'd suspect that so stupid an Animal wou'd have the Contrivance, or have indulged so mischievous a Thought:——But I deserve it for taking Advice of the *Monkey*, who, no doubt, had some self-interested View in urging me to crack a few Jokes on the *Ass*.——That Urchin has a distant Purpose in all he does. He has some End in widening the Breach 'twixt me and the *Ass*.——If I can, by his Means, be eased of the Weight of the *Bear*, I must for a While bend to his Will. But, after I shall have put an End to this War, I must contrive to take him down before I begin another; otherways I shall have him a Clog on my Wheel to that Power and Influence I have in View. Shou'd I be able to baffle my present Enemies, and end this War happily, I shan't need another. But shou'd not I succeed so as to dictate to
all

all around me, and be able to keep my Conquests, I shall end this War soon, that I may the sooner begin another, which I propose shall put me in the full and quiet Possession of what I hold at present. Ah! this Congress will stand in my Way to Conquest, if I can't render it abortive.— We are to meet anon.—I'll make a Visit to the *Mediator*, and plan out for him the Conduct he is to observe. He is feeble and infirm, and wants to have his Memory refresh'd. As for his Intentions, I cannot doubt they are favourable to our Side of the Question, since the Honour of the Mediation was procured him by my particular Influence and Address. If the Company get Wind how I came by my Lameness, I shall become the Jest of the Forest. To be over-reached by an *Afs*! Shameful! What will the World say!—He will have more Sense than to proclaim his Infraction of the Cessation; and I can impute my Limp to an Accident. [Exit.

S C E N E IX.

Scene, a Conference of the Afs's Confederates, under a spreading Oak.

Enter the Horse, Tygress, Wolf, and Otter.

Tyg. I cou'd be pleas'd you had not lost Sight of him. He is so feeble that I wish his Spindles may be able to bear him hither.

Wolf. I wish rather that he has not fell in *Reynard's* Way, who wou'd sooner bear him from than to us.

Otter. Never fear his falling in Love with *Reynard*, to whom he bears a natural Antipathy. I rather fear he is fallen in Love with himself, and

and fell in some Pond by the Way, where he had been viewing his new Trappings. Eh, eh!

Horse. I cannot answer for his Conduct of late, he is grown so uncommonly whimsical.—— How do you think he serv'd me not along ago in the Company of a few select Friends, who had join'd me in advising him to promote the Work of Peace as ardently as he cou'd? He scrambl'd on my Back, and swore, if he must make Peace, I shou'd bear him to the Congress.

Tyg. How did you bear the Affront?

Horse. As a prudent Wife wou'd the Impertinence of a drivelling Husband; smil'd at the Whim, and turn'd it off as a Joke to divert the Company. But when we were got by ourselves, he had it to the Quick.

Otter. How does gentle Correction sit on his proud Stomach? Eh, eh!

Horse. Better than any one wou'd imagine. He'll kick and flounce, and swear and rant; but when that swaggering Fit is over, you may lead him in a rush Collar.—— Here he comes; see what you can do with him, that I may not be put to the Necessity of exercising any Authority I may have. I wou'd expose him as little as I cou'd.

S C E N E X.

Enter the Ass.

Ass. A Villain! to take such Liberties with one of my Figure! I'll shew him the Difference; I will so.——

Tyg. Sir, you are discomposed.——

Ass. I am so, Madam. And who wou'd not,

to be made the Ridicule of Varlets not worth the hanging?

Tyg. Pray, Sir, who offended you!

Afs. No matter, no matter. The Jest was paid for, and that's enough.—Well, this Meeting was to settle the Steps to be taken at the general Conference—I say, No Peace, unless that publick Spoiler the *Fox*, be humbled to the Earth. Amputation; Amputation, I say. Let him be pursued till he have not a Leg to stand on, nor a Tail to sweep the Dust in Folks Eyes.

Tyg. 'Twere to be wish'd the Power of offending cou'd be taken from *Reynard*; but what Prospect is there that he shall be reduced by continuing the War?

Afs. If you and others had done as became you, he had been brought low before now. But you shifted off the Burden to me, as if the Quarrel had been wholly mine, tho' in Reality I had nothing to do with it; and had I been wise wou'd have minded my own Business at Home, and left the Burden and Honour of the War to those whom it belonged to.—But I must be persuaded forsooth?

Horse. Hush! You forget where you are.

[*Aside to the Afs.*

Afs. 'Sblood! tell me not of Places and Seasons, I say, and I'll stand to it, that it was not friendly to involve me in a Quarrel I had no Concern in.

Horse. You'll expose yourself if you oblige me to exercise my Authority.—You understand me.

[*Aside to the Afs.*

Tyg. I am sorry to see the potent Lord of the Forest in so peevish a Mood. You are fullen for being brought into the War, and are testy for being urg'd to get out of it.

Afs.

Ass. Now I am in, I wou'd fain get out of it with Credit.

Otter. Credit! such another Phantom as Honour, I suppose.——E'en keep it all to yourself, and get me out of the War with Safety.

Horse. So your Fish and Cheese be safe, the War may take Care of itself for thee. Eh, eh!

Otter. I don't find that any of you, except the generous *Lion* (*pointing sneeringly to the Ass*) are less inamour'd with dear *Self-Interest* than the Fish-loving *Otter*. You, Mr. *Palfry*, had a View to *Acquisitions* in egging on the War; and tho' it was a Necessity on the *Tygress*, and partly such on the *Wolf*, *Self-Interest* was not however the more out of the Question. But my lordly Neighbour there was actuated solely by his publick Spirit, which has engag'd him, to my Knowledge, to be a Party, and a Principal too, in all the Brangles that have been in the Forest for the last half Century and more.

Ass. For which I have dearly paid. But, my Friend *Otter*, you know I have not always had the free Exercise of my own Will for most of the Period you mention.

Otter. Like a wise Ruler, as you are, you suffer'd yourself to be govern'd——by Fools and Knaves. (*aside.*) But the Truth is, Neighbour, you have a natural Itch to *Meddling*, thrusting your Nose into other Folks Affairs, and are no Enemy to kicking and cuffing.——You'll excuse my Plain-dealing.

Tyg. Nor to *Cock-fighting*, and *Bull* and *Bear-beating*; and what shews better the Nature of the Beast than his Diversions? Eh, eh!

Otter.

Otter. Marry, if one were to judge of your Ladyship's Disposition by your Diversions, he must be a Mate of high Mettle indeed that dares venture upon you ; for except tippling and quarrelling, I know no Amusement you delight in.

Tyg. And that I may have the greater Leisure for tippling, you see I am for ending this Quarrel the soonest that can be. Eh, eh !

Ass. What ! without the Participation of the *Bear*, who comes so far to help worrying that arch Deceiver !

Otter. I must confess 'twould be very uncourtly to bring his *Bearish* Majesty so great a Way from home, and not solace him with a *Fox-hunting* Match before he returns. Eh, eh !

Tyg. I fancy he may be brought to excuse the Unpoliteness, so he be reimburs'd his Travelling-Charges.

Otter. Of that he took special Care before his setting out.

Wolf. Prudence is a commendable Virtue.

Otter. Certainly ; and it is my Friend the *Lion's* good Luck and mine to meet none but prudent Folks. But of all who have done us the Honour to participate of our *Bounties*, the *Bear* has used us with most Ceremony. But I impute it to his being of the *Greek Church*, wherein Ceremonials are said to be thought essential.

Tyg. I did not think the *Bear*, of all Animals, wou'd have stood much on Ceremony.

Otter. 'Tis a Sign you don't know him. Wou'd you believe that my Lord *Lion* and myself were two full Months battling with him to permit us to pay him in Bills of Exchange, which are light and portable

portable, rather than incumber him in his Journey with Specie. But there was no prevailing.

Tyg. Was not his Obstinacy rather owing to too little *Faith* than too much Ceremony? Eh, eh!

Ass. I wish he were here to see if his Courage exceed his Faith.

Otter. I wish you had never hector'd me to make Trial of either.

Ass. Would you be hunted down by the *Fox*?

Otter. Thank you for bringing him upon me, and am still more in your Debt for helping me to a less powerful, tho' not less despotick *Lord*.— You understand me.

Horse. A *Saviour* you mean; for to such I help'd you in your Distress.

Otter. And much Good he did me all the last Summer and Winter too, except in the latter to have join'd you in bullying me into an Expence I am unable to support.——*Lord Lion*, you are, or might be if you wou'd, rich and powerful, and you are by Nature generous and free. Now, I, on the contrary, am poor, and am by Nature frugal and close: Therefore are we the unfittest to carry on the War jointly that ever were coupled together. Name of God then, if you be for continuing the War, take my Share of it; you are no less welcome to the Honour of it than the Expence.

Ass. I can see that *Reynard* has been wheedling all of you in my Absence. He dreads the coming up of the *Bear*, and cringes and fawns.—

Otter. What can he more than restoring all his Conquests? Happy had it been for us if he had been taken at his Word when he first made the Offer.

Afs. My dear *Otty*, let us have one fair Stroke at him before we give out, and I shall love you dearly.

Otter. Such has been the Language any Time these three Years past. And what have you got but Confusion and broken Bones by persevering to hope, every Summer, to knock him down? One would have thought, the last Spring, you would have swallowed him up Fur and all, yet was he permitted to nestle within my Domains, without so much as an Attempt to cut his Wezon, by either your mighty Self or my new Task-Master.

Afs. Unforeseen Accidents, and Superiority of Numbers.——

Otter. Which very likely may bring the *Fox* to my last Dyke, if not obstructed by an sudden Peace.——By my being urgent for Peace, I throw the Odium of any ill Success that may attend the Continuance of the War on my *New Master*; and so get more surely rid of him, than I can hope by the most solid Peace. [*Aside.*]

Wolf. Shou'd *Reynard* be sincere, a Peace may certainly be grafted on the Congress, if Lord *Lion* does not impede it.

Tyg. See that you don't obstruct it by insisting to keep what you have torn from the *Badger*.

Wolf. Madam, I shall desire to keep nothing that you had not given me a Right to.

Otter. Pshaw! Pshaw! Name it not. Cou'd she give a Right that had none?

Tyg. Mr. *Otter*, never any Thing went to my Heart so much as the being persuaded to gratify the *Wolf*, by that Treaty, at the Expence of my own Honour, and the Memory of my *Dad*.
But

But there was no keeping him in Temper without my arming him with that colourable Title to Part of his Neighbour's Possessions.

Otter. My worthy Friend here lives in thin Air, near the *Alps*; therefore may be excusable for having a more than ordinary craving Appetite.

Wolf. I don't see that my Whet is keener than her Ladyship's, that had raised such unheard of Contributions on that very *Badger*.

Otter. They say that what's got over the D—I's Back goes under his Belly: And so it seems; for her Ladyship is not a Whit the richer for those immense Contributions raised out of mere Poverty and Want.

Wolf. She surely espies much Affluence when she can meditate a second Visit to the *Badger*.

Ass. Which she postpones till I lay down her travelling Charges.

Otter. An Honour which I shou'd be proud on, if her Ladyship had not thought you more worthy.

Ass. Oh! dear Sir; you are extremely welcome to stand in my Boots.——

Otter. Not for the World. I know myself better.——

Tyg. And am I thus to be fobb'd off by a Joke? I wou'd have to know, that I am not destitute of a Resource.——And that's enough.

[To the Ass.

Horse. Why wou'd you put her Ladyship in a such Passion for the Value of such a Trifle as she requires?

[Aside to the Ass.

Ass. 'Oon's! Man! Do you call that a Trifle, which none of your Generation ever saw himself Master of, before you had the fingering my Purse?

Horse.

Horse. Softly, Sir, if you please. Those Airs become you as ill as your new Covering.—— Take it for your Pains if you are exposed; you may thank your own Indiscretion.

[*Aside to the Ass.*

Otter. Nay, nay; for that Matter I think my Neighbour excusable, considering how excessively burdenson the War has been to him.

Tyg. He best knows why it has been continued against my Will and Opinion. Is it not therefore just that he pays the Piper who drags the Company to dance the Hays?

Ass. Madam, are these your grateful Returns for relieving you in your Distress?

Tyg. Wou'd I turn my Tail on you, I cou'd have what Terms I please from the *Fox*; so that in my Relief, as you term it, you sought your own Safety more than mine.—Much oblig'd am I to you that forced me to ratify the Resignation of my Right *Ear* to the *Monkey*, and lured me to risque the losing my Tail in agreeing to begin the Fray on this Side of the Forest. My Sweep is already gone by following your Advice; yet you still wou'd persuade me to grant *Provision* for the young *Leopard* out of that little which remains.

Wolf. I see the Vapour of Disunion rising among the Confederates; therefore, if I swerve not from the Maxims of my Family, I shall look immediately to my own distinct Interest. (*aside*)——Let us forbear Reproach, and unite for the Purpose of Safety. About this Time the grand Conference opens. Let us repair thither, and feel the Enemy's Pulse,

Otter.

Otter. I wish the Enemy may not have thumb'd thine to some Purpose. (*aside*) I like the Advice. Come, let us jogg on, Neighbour *long Ears*, and see, if by thy Address we can't turn the Tables on *Reynard*, and transform him to an *Ass*, as one of my Acquaintance has been of late.

Ass. You shall see what a Figure I'll cut there. —Let me be the *Ass* if I don't make the Forest ring with the Justice of our Cause, and the Deceit and Ambition of the common Enemy. —It has been said, that the *Fox* gains by Negotiation what he loses in the Field. I say, he shall lose by the Pen, what he gain'd by the Sword.

Otter. And surely thy Word may be taken, who, by a long Arrow's Length, are subtler than the *Fox*, and more arch and engaging than the *Monkey*. —Hey for the Field of Victory. —Allons Messieurs. [Exeunt.

S C E N E XI.

Scene, a Spring at the Foot of a Rock in the Forest.

The Fox, Leopard, Boar and Badger, as if in Conference.

Fox. My Friends and Allies, let me persuade you to calm your Suspicions, and harbour a better Opinion of our Honour and Justice, than to suppose any Consideration can induce us to abandon you. If my Cousin, the *Leopard*, has not mention'd you in the secret separate Negotiation that had been lately on Foot between him and the *Ass*, 'twas because nothing was meant by it, but to amuse the Simpleton, who thought to detatch my Kinsman from his own Flesh and Blood.

Badg.

Badg. Thus lowly do we bend the Knee in grateful Thanks.—[*The Boar and he bow to the Fox*] But may I have your Leave.—

Fox. You have full Liberty. Speak with Freedom.

Badg. *The Wolf.*—

Fox. Tho' he be my Uncle, I am not blind to his Faults. He has a sharp Appetite, and a Hawk's Eye to his Prey.—You are afraid we shall acquiesce in his detaining those Possessions of yours, which the Fortune of the War had put in his Hands.—Fear it not; and that you may be sure we shan't deceive you, extend your View, examine Matters with Seriousness, and you'll perceive, that it never can be the Interest of our House to contribute towards aggrandizing the Family of the *Wolves*. The *Tygress* is no less jealous of their growing Power, tho' at present in Alliance with them. And I wonder the *Wolf*, a Beast of Foresight, does not see that it wou'd be his Interest to strengthen rather than weaken the *Badger*, whose Friendship he shou'd cultivate as an ulterior Counterbalance that he may one Day stand in Need of.—But enough on the Subject at present. Let us to the Conference, where you shall hear your Cause defended by all the Ability I am Master of.—My Cousin and myself will follow. [*Exeunt the Boar and the Badger*] Cousin, I am pleas'd with your Treatment of the Enemy. The *Ass* grows sulky, and will be neither led nor driven into a Peace by his Confederates, on a Supposition that he can secure you when he will, by throwing to you those sweet Morfels he detain'd from you since the last general War. You find the *Wolf* inclin'd to wish that Proposals might
come

come from us; urge him no more; for, in a few Days more, my Life he will be glad to make them himself.—If the News we expect shou'd arrive this Evening, the Confusion it will put the Enemy in, will save us Appearances, and all the Drudgery of a long, formal Negotiation. What News from the *Monkey*, since Morning?

Leop. That he shou'd be at the Conference, and hoped to come there attended.

Fox. By the *Bear*, I suppose.—'Tis the artfullest Urchin I ever knew.—He keeps me for ever at Arms Length.—Hear you not the Braying of the *Ass*? The Conference is already open'd, and the *Ass*, I suppose, is laying down the Law as dogmatically as if he had been really the *Lion* he once was.—Vain Animal! But 'tis fit we make our Appearance to awe him a little, else he might frighten the old Mediator into Fits. [Exit.

SCENE XII.

Scene, a small Plain in the Midst of the Forest, rising at one End.

The Goat, on an elevated Ground, has on his Left, in a semicircular Form, the Ass, the Horse, the Tygres, the Wolf, and the Otter; and on his Right, the Fox, the Leopard, the Boar, and the Badger.

Fox. Venerable Mediator, [addressing himself to the Goat] if your Impartiality, and the Justice of the Cause I undertake to maintain, had not inspired me with Hopes of succeeding, I shou'd not attempt measuring Words with the lordly O-rator who heads the Confederacy against us. He
is

is skilled in all the Arts of moving the Passions, whereas I am only capable of speaking Truth.—

Ass. That is as much as to say, I lie—'Oons! Sir; what do you mean by it?

Fox. Your Excellency perceives the Difficulties I labour under.

Goat. the Affront reaches me more than any.—Sir, I am apt to think that you forget where you are, and the Respect due to the Mediation.

Ass. Sir, I know I am before an old *Goat*, whom I neither sought nor wish'd to meddle in my Affairs.—If you are angry that I resent foul Language in your Presence, the sooner you lay down your mediating Cap the better. For I tell you over and over, that I'll knock down any Son of a W—— that dares offer me the least Affront; tho' all your horn'd, bearded Generation were here to take your Part. [*The Horse whispers him*] Prithee, tell me not of all your Stuff of Politeness, and courtly Behaviour. A Lie is a Lie, whether given in the Presence of a Mediator or a Pimp. The Place alters not its Propriety; for which Reason, let him look to himself who dares give it me.

Otter. Boldly challeng'd, old Tough; thy Heart is good at least—I can't, however, boast much of the Head-Piece.

[*Whispering to the Horse.*

Horse. Mr. Mediator, my Friend here is somewhat hasty and cholerick, but excessive good-natur'd; I take upon me to say that he intended you no Affront.

Ass. Not I; but if he take it, let'n; and that for him.—[*Letting a rousing F——t.*

Goat.

Goat. This is past bearing.—

[*A hideous Noise without.*

Afs. Ay, so it is.—Take Care you don't be-foul your Breeches, old Gentleman.

S C E N E XIII.

Enter the Monkey, leading the Bear muzzled.

Monk. Here, Shantlemen and Ladies de fine Raree-Show——You shall zee, vat you shall zee. Eh, eh!

Afs. 'Oons! Neighbour *Otter*, is that our *Bear*, that Animal that cost us such a d——d Sight of Money?

Otter. The same.

Afs. Is it not all a Contrivance to bubble us? Wou'd so strong a Beast else suffer himself to be muzzled by so little an Urchin?

Otter. You forget how that Urchin you affect to despise keeps the whole Forest in Awe.—Zooks! what's here? more *Bears*!

[*The Cry of a Buck-Hound without.*

Afs. I'll be hang'd if this ben't our Courier with Account of some d——d Trick of the perfidious *Fox*.

Fox. The News comes to my Wish.

[*Aside to the Leopard.*

Enter the Hound almost suffocated with Sweat and Dust.

Hound. Ah, Gentle-folks!—Excuse me for a Moment.—I made such Speed to inform you of your Danger—and the Perfidy of the *Fox*.—

Afs. I thought as much. He ne'er will be honest till he is knockt on the Head.

Hound. Wretched *Otter*! Thy principal *Barrier* is in *Reynard's* Hands.

Afs.

The Congress of the Beasts.

Afs. Ah, the Villain! to attack us while we are in Consultation about Peace! Oons! unmuzzle the Bear, and let us be revenged.—

[*The Bear, unmuzzled by the Tygress, rushes on the Fox, who runs off with his Confederates, simpering and tittering; then makes furiously at the Monkey, who leaps on his Back; and springing off again addresses himself to the Company, who all cringe to and fawn upon him.*

Monk. Enough, enough!—You know me little, or you wou'd not think to cajole and win me by such flattering Caresses. You wou'd have had me if I had not been ill-used by some of you, from whom I expected other Treatment—You know my Maxim is, to love myself better than all the World beside. I am no longer a Friend to the Fox than I find my Account in keeping well with him. But when you can shew me that it will be my Interest to break with him, I am yours; meanwhile, take this well-meant Advice.

*In vain you wage the War, or seek the Peace,
'Till civil Dudgeon 'mong yourselves shall cease.*

F I N I S